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THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY

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CLASSICAL CONFERENCE AT PHILADELPHIA

On Saturday, November 27, a Classical Conference was held at Philadelphia, in connection with the annual meeting of The Association of Colleges and Preparatory Schools for the Middle States and Maryland. For the programme see *THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY* 9.48. There was a good attendance, including seven or eight persons who journeyed from Greater New York. The tone of the meeting was decidedly vigorous and helpful.

It is hoped that the papers of Professors Robinson and Vlachos may be available presently for publication in *THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY*.

The main theme of the day was Cooperation. The discussion was begun by Miss Jessie E. Allen, of the Girls High School, Philadelphia. Miss Allen spoke of efforts at correlation with other subjects in this High School. Correlation, she said at the outset, is no new thing; most teachers of Latin, if not all, have long practised it, even if they have said nothing about their practice.

Cooperation of Latin with English is of first importance. So, in the Girls High School, stress is laid on Greek and Latin roots and stems, and on Greek and Latin prefixes, especially such as are parts of the assigned work in English in the School. Much work is done on the commoner abbreviations (in this connection attention may be called to Professor Dunn's paper, *THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY* 4.130-132). Emphasis is laid from the very first on the fact that English borrowed from Latin before there really was any English language. There is insistence, too, that the pupils shall go to the root meanings of the Latin words, and so shall see the pictures that underly English words derived from the Latin. Exercises in vocabulary are varied by written exercises in spelling of English words; at such times the pupils are required to think of the Latin originals as an aid to spelling, and to underline the vowels in the English words which are likely to give trouble. In this way, it is hoped, students will learn to spell such words as genitive and imperative. In the later years of the course, stress is laid on the finding of parallels between Latin passages, especially in Vergil, and passages in English literature. The effort is made also to give help to an understanding of some at least of the terms of science. The more difficult terms are, indeed, left to the scientists themselves, but instruction is given in the etymology and under-

lying meanings of some of the names of the commoner plants and animals. Connection is made, too, between Latin and French and Spanish; a teacher of Vergil in the School, by giving a little help here and there, enabled a class to understand a printed discussion in Italian of the Laocoon episode. The teacher of Vergil in particular can bring the work into connection with a wide array of themes.

Miss Allen made a vigorous plea for better equipment of our class-rooms, with books that are up to date, maps, pictures, charts, etc. Our class-rooms should look more like classical workshops. A bulletin board may be made most effective, as a kind of constantly changing proof of the connection between classical and modern things (see *THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY* 9.55-56).

The Rev. F. P. Donnelly, S.J., of Gonzaga College, Washington, D. C., made a very inspiring contribution to the discussion. Latin and Greek, he said, were long taught as a preparation for life, particularly by the Jesuits. Since the beginning of the nineteenth century, however, they have been used rather as a means of teaching some science, such as philology or archaeology ("science is concerned with information"). For his own part, he continued, he cared little how Caesar built his bridge or how the Romans fought; he counted it far more important, far more helpful, to study Caesar as a means of learning how to write history, how to compose a narrative. Latin and Greek orations should be studied as a means of comprehending the principles of style and composition. Every element that goes into artistic narration in English may be found and studied in Caesar. The paragraph may be studied in Caesar and Cicero as it may be studied in English. Here, he held, the Jesuits have a great advantage, in that with them one professor teaches Latin, Greek and English. Indeed, such matters as those suggested above may be better studied in Latin than in English, since the Classical style is far better than English style, certainly in the newer developments of that style, which is conversational in character, approximating ever more closely to the style—or lack of style—of the newspaper.

Variety, again, is an important element of English style. So, too, is harmony, especially the harmony of contrast (see e.g. Irving). Admirable examples are to be found in that portion of the *Pro Marcello* in which Cicero emphasizes the thought that Caesar's

act in sparing Marcellus is greater even than his exploits in war; in performing the latter he had helpers, in this last and greatest achievement he stood alone. Professor Donnelly urged the value of careful analysis, in tabular form, of important works in Greek and Latin. He held, too, that students should be compelled to visualize words; of such a word as *auctoritas* a concrete illustration should be given, through the citation, for instance, of some act in which Caesar displayed the quality in question. In the study of the Classics, again, we can get aids to clear thinking; in that study we are obliged to pause on the very threshold of expression. In English, on the other hand, just because we understand that language, in one sense, so easily, we find it hard to pause, to reflect. In the study of the Classics, again, we can get wondrous training in the use of the imagination. In the Pro Marcello Cicero urges on Caesar the thought that Caesar has not lived long enough for the good of the world. Figure after figure Cicero uses to describe the life, the career of Caesar: it is by turns a great building, a field, a wondrous light, etc.

These, then, are the things to be taught; to these things we should subordinate the so-called scientific study of Latin, in philology, archaeology, etc. Through such study as this, illustrated by concrete exercises in writing English, the boast that the study of Latin aids to a mastery of English can be made a fact. Recurring to the thought that, in the study of the Classics, we have fine opportunity to comprehend variety, as a grace of style, Professor Donnelly reminded his audience how often (72 times, some one has said), Demosthenes, in the De Corona, reverts, in varying forms of expression, to the thought that Aeschines should have brought his indictment eight years before.

In connection with what Professor Donnelly said of the tendency of contemporary English writing I may reproduce a remark I read somewhere, that English, as now written, is marked by simple sentences, arranged in completely paratactic form. Where subordinate clauses are used at all, they come in after the main clause, evidently as after-thoughts; the sentences were plainly not framed from the outset as complex (in the technical sense), as periods, as logically ordered wholes, marked, as the Latin sentence so often is, by abundant use of hypotaxis. The truth of this saying any one may test for himself—indeed, he may test it by watching his own writing for a season. This tendency of English style is making even harder than it was for young pupils the task of mastering the fully developed periodic Latin sentence. C. K.

'THY SPEECH BEWRAYETH THEE'

It is night. Jesus has been seized and is being led away to Caiaphas the high priest, with whom are assembled all the chief priests, the elders, and the scribes. A fisherman, in company with another disciple, follows his master afar off. That disciple is known to the high priest, and so he follows the prisoner into the palace.

The fisherman, however, stands at the door without. Now that other disciple that is known to the high priest goes out, speaks to the damsel that keeps the door, and brings in Peter. It is cold and a fire has been kindled in the hall. We see Peter among the servants, warming himself at the fire. A maid of the high priest sees the fisherman, and, as she looks upon him, she says, 'And thou also wast with Jesus of Nazareth'. But Peter denies, saying, 'I know not, neither understand I what thou sayest'. He goes out on the porch and the cock crows. Another damsel sees him and says to those that stand by, 'This is one of them'. He denies again, but it is of no avail. He cannot hide his identity. A little later, those that stand by again say unto him, 'Surely thou art one of them: for thou art a Galilean and thy speech agreeth thereto'. Both Matthew 26.73 and Mark 14.70 say that Peter's speech betrayed him. Luke 22.59 simply states his nationality; John 17 mentions neither language nor nationality.

Now Peter was not the only Semite to whom clung his vernacular. The historian Josephus says of himself, *Antiquitates Iudaeorum* 20.11 (9). 2, that he understood the elements of the Greek language and that he had taken a great deal of pains to master the language of that people. Still he could not pronounce their language with exactness, since he had been accustomed to speak his own tongue, i.e. Aramaic, for so long a time before learning to speak Greek. Probably he felt the same inconvenience as did the Latin poets born at Cordova, whose speech, according to Cicero *Pro Archia* 26, had a somewhat thick and foreign accent.

In this connection, we recall the experience of another Semite, who probably was the greatest military genius that the world has ever seen. According to Dio Cassius (*Zonaras* 8.24. 8, in *Boissevain* 1. 206), Hannibal knew many languages, among which was Latin, but nevertheless he could not imitate all foreign sounds perfectly (*Plutarch*, *Fabius Maximus* 6.1: *Livy* 22.13). In 217 B. C., Hannibal resolved to march from Samnium into Campania, and commanded his guide (*Plutarch* mentions 'guides') to conduct him into the territory of Casinum. But, since he spoke with a Carthaginian accent and mispronounced the Latin words, the guide misunderstood him and thought that he said Casilinum instead of Casinum; so that, turning from the high road, he led Hannibal through the territories of Allifae, Calatia, and Cales down into the plain of Stellas. Hannibal called the man and asked him where he was. He replied that Hannibal would lodge that night at Casilinum; but, when Hannibal discovered that Casinum lay at a very great distance in a quite different direction, rage overcame his sense of justice. The unfortunate guide was scourged and crucified. Hannibal's education was of no mean sort, but in spite of that his tongue remained African.

Later on in history, we meet another great African who retained the intonation of his mother tongue.